

CHAP.
VI.

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the protection of secluded woods, or migrate like the Todas for the period of the monsoon season.

It is also a Toda custom to vacate a house, or even the entire village, for a certain limited period, if one of their number should have died, or sickness be rife amongst the community or attack their cattle.

In these matters they follow the dictates of sorrow, of prudence, or of necessity, much as we do under very similar circumstances. We too, who can afford the luxury, have a town as well as a country house; take trips to the sea-side, or at times vacate the tenement which some dear one has just left for ever. These people do no more. No Toda is so persistently migratory as thousands of our own countrymen are.

361 From what is here written it will be understood why the
621 Nilagiris may have upwards of one hundred Mandas on its
342 surface, yet not more than forty of the number be actually occupied.

I have ascertained, in the course of a careful census of eleven Toda Mandas—the detailed results of which will be found tabulated in Chapter X.—that they contain from two to three dwelling-houses or huts, whose general appearance is depicted on the frontispiece. Most of these houses consist of only one room or cabin, but many are formed by the junction of two, and sometimes even of three rooms in a line; each with its own door leading direct into the external air and unconnected with one another. The Toda name for a room and for a house is the same.

The rooms, though all of the exact same shape, vary somewhat in size; from five to six cubits square in area, and from five to six cubits high. Thus, a house of two rooms would be about 8 ft. by 16 ft.; and a house of three rooms would measure some 8 ft. by 24 ft.

572 Each room holds one entire subdivision of a family.

342 The roofs of all houses are thatched with grass and

IAP. the pockets of which, food, such as roast grain, sugar, *et cetera*,
 CK. and small pieces of wood are put. He is now ready for his
 764 journey to amnôr: he has food for the road.

It is a fact of interest and worth noting in connection with this narrative, that the Badagas—who have been already described as believed to be cognate to the Todas—preserve the custom common to the Greeks, of placing an *obolus* in the mouth of the dying man. So important do the Badagas consider the due performance of this last rite to the living, that they will keep a supply of this metal disc about the person in order that one may always be at hand for use on occasion. But to continue:—

The body is brought out from the little house and laid with care on the rough bier, formed with branches from the village grove.

The nearest kēdu Mand is out on a spur of that hill we see on the horizon, full six miles off. So there is no time to be lost. Good bye, dear old crone—his grandmother, and the young aunt with the new-born babe, and that sad little assembly of children, all brothers, sisters, uncles, nieces, of the dead man; some too old, others too young, all too weak, to trudge to the horizon over hill and dale.

● [765] Now his house is shut up: the little door is closed. Twigs and leaves lying scattered on the ground: a neglected grindstone leaning against the wall: a piece of forgotten matting: the cat rubbing its ill-fed body on the door panel: the pertinacious flies about the house—all conspire to tell the tale of the savage's deserted dwelling, and the drama just enacted.

The corpse is rested for a few moments on the low surrounding wall, whilst its tall bearers step into the village pathway. The little family group which is to remain, crouches weeping close by. The others are busy with their adjustments preparatory to the long walk. The whole picture is before us; primitive, simple, or savage, yet these people have a thorough human appreciation of the moment.

CHAP.
XXI.

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THE DRY FUNERAL *In the very**early morning of the first of a two days' ceremonial* and long before these guests have begun to arrive,

the family of the deceased have a little private ordinance of

their own; in burning all his personal property, such as his stick

or staff, the honnu or milk vessel, and clothes: also a *flute*

or flageolet, and a model of a bow with bamboo 'strings,' and

*arrows.** I could not ascertain any reason whatever for this

musical instrument and these spurious weapons being burnt.

Be it particularly borne in mind that the Todas have no sense

of music and do not possess a flute in the whole tribe: that

they never hunt, and have no weapons of the chase. These

toys are made by the Kotas entirely for the occasion. Thus

it was, I experienced some difficulty in buying the bow, which

will be found in photograph No. 15. The first question asked

of the man who purchased it for me from the Kota, was 'Who

is dead?'

765 The opening public ceremony of the day, is a kind of dance

535 performed by from twenty to fifty men. The dance I witnessed

801 was monotonous enough. It consisted of the body of men,

keeping step whilst striding round and round like the spokes of

a wheel; each spoke having three men arm in arm: and all

exclaiming, rather than shouting, 'A I U I A I U I' in time

with their steps. I could trace nothing symbolic in the ex-

hibition except that strange number three, which I notice in

all religious matters, to be constantly appearing. It may be

that the dance and shout are both merely a Toda mode of

giving vent and expression to a festive state of mind.

765 Whilst this dance is being carried on by the men, the

women prepare food in the hut described in the last Chapter,

which has been repaired or renewed for this occasion. Here

all the guests assemble, the two sexes sitting apart. The women

of the family serve out the supplies from the diminutive door to

* Captain Forsyth, in his 'Highlands of Central India,' writes of the

Bygas, 'their bows are made entirely of the bamboo, "string" and

all.'

* The Toda word for *I shout*, is 'A I U I' bisharthken, or *I call out*A' U' I', the bara Kêdu, or *Second funeral*—Analyst